

TRIBUTE LINDA HIRVONEN

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2006

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an outstanding individual who has dedicated the last nine years of her life to spurring economic growth and development in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Ms. Linda Hirvonen retired at the end of June as Director of the Delta County Economic Development Alliance. During her time there, she worked tirelessly on economic and community development in northern Michigan.

Ms. Hirvonen was critical to business and job growth in Delta County. As of April 2006, there were 2,400 more people in the workforce than when she began in 1997. Ms. Hirvonen assisted 575 individuals and companies looking to start a business or relocate in Delta County. Those statistics are impressive and speak to Ms. Hirvonen's record of success and accomplishment. However, they only tell part of the story. What she will perhaps be remembered for most is the leadership and vision in economic development that she brought to the job and to Delta County.

Ms. Hirvonen is credited by many as coining the term "coopetition," the concept that private businesses should cooperate with each other and with nonprofits to develop the community infrastructure that will facilitate economic growth and lay the foundation for a stable business environment. This concept of "coopetition" has guided Delta County's Economic Development Alliance and the many programs that Ms. Hirvonen developed during her tenure.

Ms. Hirvonen was instrumental in the creation of the Upper Peninsula Economic Development Alliance and served as the Alliance's first president. She saw to the creation of the Bay Area Economic Club and served as the Club's permanent board secretary. She pioneered the creation of Delta Force, the community leadership development program.

A newcomer herself to the area in 1997, Ms. Hirvonen established a program through the Alliance that provides a network of support for newcomers to Delta County. She recognized that for the community to grow, newcomers to the area need to feel welcome. The newcomers unit provided a valuable network for those individuals and businesses that are new to Delta County.

Ms. Hirvonen also led the Alliance's efforts to better assess the needs of existing businesses in the Upper Peninsula. Thanks to her leadership, the Economic Development Alliance implemented the Upper Peninsula Business Barometer, a UP-wide survey of existing businesses to better understand business' needs and strengths.

The overarching goal of the Economic Development Alliance has been to support and assist business creation, growth and expansion in Delta County. Ms. Hirvonen has been tremendously successful in advancing that goal, attracting several businesses to Delta County. She is particularly proud of one new business, Issues and Answers Network. This business came to Delta County in 2001 and, with the Alliance's help, opened two more locations throughout the Upper Peninsula. The company employs 150 people in Escanaba

and, thanks to this expansion, Issues and Answers should employ more than 300 people throughout the Upper Peninsula by the end of this year.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Linda Hirvonen has made it her business to see to business expansion and growth in Delta County and in the Upper Peninsula. Bringing business and economic growth to smaller, rural communities is often challenging. It can only happen when people like Ms. Hirvonen dedicate themselves to the effort. Today, after nine years of distinguished service to her community, I congratulate Ms. Hirvonen on a job well done.

Her husband, Dr. Michael Allkins, recently retired himself. The two of them will now have more time for their mutual pastimes of golf, long walks on sandy beaches and martinis at sunset. To both of them, I say: enjoy, you have earned it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and the House of Representatives join me in congratulating my friend, my constituent, Ms. Linda Hirvonen and thanking her for her hard work and nine years of service to Delta County and Michigan's entire Upper Peninsula.

SUPPORT FOR EAST TIMOR**HON. BARNEY FRANK**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2006

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, several of us in the House are proud of the role we played in helping gain independence for the new nation of East Timor, and we have been pleased by the commitment of the leaders of that new nation to democracy. In particular, we believe that the President, Xanana Gusmao, and the former Foreign Minister and newly-designated Prime Minister, Jose Ramos Horta, have shown a commitment to the maintenance of a fully democratic society. In fact, President Gusmao—widely known and revered by the people of East Timor as Xanana—worked to get a candidate to oppose him in the first presidential election in the country because he wanted to set the right precedent.

It was with great sadness therefore that we watched the violence that wracked this small country in recent weeks, and we believe that it is very important that the responsible leadership of East Timor receive the support they need to make this violence a temporary interruption in their progress as a nation. One very important element in this effort is the United Nations, contrary to those who would dismiss the UN as of no use in today's world. In a recent article in the Boston Globe, Prime Minister Ramos Horta and Raj Purohit make the case that "it is vital that the UN continue to lead an inclusive effort to insure that Timor-Leste (the Portuguese official name for East Timor) becomes a strong democratic member of the international community." In addition to the UN, Australia has played a very constructive role in helping deal with the problems of this new nation.

Mr. Speaker, the recent violence is a sad fact, but it should not lead to pessimism about the longer-term future of East Timor. Instead, members of the international community should heed the words of Jose Ramos Horta and Raj Purohit and support the steps that will

lead to a stable and democratic future for this new nation. In particular, they ask that the new UN Peace Building Commission make East Timor one of the objects of its work, and I hope that this request will be supported by the United States Government and honored by the Peace Building Commission so that, in the words of the authors of this article, we can see that "Timor-Leste finally takes its place among the world's stable democratic countries."

[From the Boston Globe]

JOSE RAMOS HORTA AND RAJ PUROHIT

In recent weeks commentators have framed the uprisings in Timor Leste as a country that has spiraled into violence despite UN peacekeepers. This gives the false impression that the United Nations has failed in the country formerly known as East Timor. The reality is significantly different.

Having declared its independence a mere four years ago, Timor Leste is still a fledgling nation emerging from the aftermath of a long, and often bloody, struggle for freedom. Though citizens have been ably assisted by various UN missions as they attempt to build the country, Timor Leste still has many challenges to overcome. These challenges include speeding up reconciliation, building a democratic political culture, instilling the rule of law, and creating an economy that is able to provide sustainable livelihoods for its people.

While critics correctly note that efforts for reintegration and development must be redoubled, they fail to note that international commitment to long-term peace-building processes must also be redoubled. Peace-building processes that pay attention to a nation's need to feed, employ, govern, and heal itself are essential in any nation-building process. But the world failed to offer sufficient assistance to Timor Leste. The world community, including the United States, moved on to the next failing state before Timor Leste had sufficient strength to stand on its own.

Now we are at the point in Timor Leste's nation-building process where the key stakeholders need to make a calculated assessment of what needs to be done next, coupled with a renewed political and financial commitment to a UN-driven process. Yes, missteps occurred, but this does not demand a radical change of direction nor should nations abandon Timor Leste at this critical juncture.

The first order of business is to address the violence caused by the dismissal of 600 striking soldiers. In the short term, the combination of regional and UN assistance coupled with a commitment from local government officials to address the tension will help dampen the fighting. In the long term, Timor Leste, working with regional governments, in particular Australia, will need to address the broad security challenges underlying the current instability.

Second, and perhaps more significant, it is vital that the UN continue to lead an inclusive effort to ensure that Timor Leste becomes a strong, democratic member of the international community. The UN is the logical body to coordinate this initiative and it seems logical that the new UN Peace Building Commission should play a central role in this effort.

The Peace Building Commission was formed to improve the coordination of relevant actors within and outside the UN and to extend the period of attention given by the international community to post-conflict recovery. In the case of Timor Leste, the commission should coordinate efforts to ensure that:

There is an aggressive and sustained campaign to improve the livelihood of Timor

Leste's people. This effort requires local buy-in and assistance from the World Bank and national and regional development groups.

Local systems of governance are developed and respect for the rule of law is cultivated. In particular, emphasis should be placed on judicial institutions, which will enable accountability for past and current crimes.

Peace and security is guaranteed for Timor Leste. Peacekeepers, instead of leaving prematurely, must remain to support military and police troops.

The Peacebuilding Commission is selecting which post-conflict nation-states to adopt. Along with Burundi and Sierra Leone, Timor Leste is high on the list. The world community has an opportunity to rally behind Timor Leste, rather than abandon it, and help this nation become healthy and strong—a peace-building process that will take a long-term commitment from every international institution.

Ian Martin, former special representative for the UN secretary general for East Timor, is forecasting a larger role for the UN. He should recommend that the Peacebuilding Commission take the lead in ensuring Timor Leste finally takes its place among the world's stable democratic countries.

HONORING SPRINGHILL MEDICAL CENTER AS A LEADER IN HEALTHCARE TECHNOLOGY

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2006

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Springhill Medical Center.

For the past 31 years Springhill Medical Center has served the people of south Alabama through quality medical service. The administration and staff of Springhill Medical Center pride themselves on numerous services they provide to the community while maintaining a personalized approach to patient care.

I am proud to say that Springhill Medical Center is recognized as being in the top 5 percent of the most technically advanced hospitals in the United States. As a result of the hospital's investment in this technology, Springhill Medical Center was honored as a 2006 Laureate by the Computerworld Information Technology Awards Foundations.

Springhill Medical Center was nominated and received this award based on the hospital's operations in the days following Hurricane Katrina. The high volume of patients treated following the hurricane would not have been possible without the integrated technology the hospital had in place. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the emergency room provided services to as many as 72 patients at one time. In the month following Hurricane Katrina, the hospital treated 600 more patients than the same time period the previous year.

Upon receiving the award, Mr. Bill Mason, president and CEO of Springhill Medical Center, said, "Our firm decision to significantly invest in our electronic information resources has paid off for our patients and for the physicians, nurses, and technicians who care for them, and the hospital. We've been able to offer our medical staff a tool that complements the excellent care offered at Springhill Medical Center."

Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to recognize the administration and staff of Springhill Medical Center and their continuing leadership in healthcare technology and commitment to quality healthcare services throughout south Alabama.

RECOGNIZING THE SOUTH EL MONTE EMERGENCY RESOURCES ASSOCIATION

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2006

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to congratulate the South El Monte Emergency Resources Association in honor of their 50th anniversary. I am proud to recognize the invaluable contributions and charity of the South El Monte Emergency Resources Association on this historic occasion.

For over 50 years the mission of this small organization has been to "prevent homelessness and maintain stability by providing the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter for families and individuals in times of crisis." And for 50 years the South El Monte Emergency Resources Association has not faltered in upholding their noble and honorable mission. The impact they have had on thousands of lives is immeasurable. By implementing the American spirit of humble and compassionate charity, the South El Monte Resources Association has come to embody the best of the American people.

The association began their mission by providing second-hand clothing to children in unfortunate circumstances. Through the years they have expanded their services to include the provision of emergency food, clothing, home furnishings, sheets, blankets, medical supplies, and medical equipment to members of the community. Yet the work of the South El Monte Emergency Resources Association is not limited to these services; it extends beyond material assistance to provide moral support and guidance.

Today, in the face of poverty, homelessness, suffering, and insurmountable circumstances, we have hope because of groups like the South El Monte Emergency Resources Association. Without the support and assistance of such organizations, our many impoverished children, seniors, and community members would be left out in the cold with no hope in sight. Today we recognize the priceless services that charitable organizations provide to our society and I congratulate the South El Monte Emergency Resources Association for 50 years of being a model compassionate organization.

TRIBUTE TO SONNY DOLCI

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2006

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to share with my colleagues the passing of Sonny Dolci. Most Members of the House never met Sonny Dolci. But everyone

has a Sonny Dolci in their congressional district.

Sonny Dolci was a veterans' leader in Northport, Long Island. He died 3 days before Independence Day. And he had a special link to that day. Because he embodied the finest qualities of great Americans who refused to say 'no' when it came to their country or their community.

When the veterans of Northport wanted to build a new facility, Sonny Dolci said, "Give me the shovel."

When community leaders wanted to organize a celebration of Northport, Sonny helped lead what is today one of the largest festivals on Long Island: Cow Harbor Day.

When a Korean War memorial was planned, Sonny traveled to eastern Long Island, and climbed amongst the rocks to find the perfect facing.

Sonny would not take no for an answer.

That is really what Independence Day is about: the Americans who refused to say no when faced with challenge.

Two hundred thirty years ago, George Washington found himself surrounded in NY by the most powerful Navy on earth. He didn't give in, he kept up the fight for independence. And we replaced foreign monarchy with American democracy.

One hundred forty years ago, Abraham Lincoln lost battle after battle for American unity. He didn't give up. He kept fighting until we replaced slavery with liberty.

And 60 years ago, men like Sonny Dolci left their homes for World War II and then Korea. They refused to say no to defeating tyranny and totalitarianism.

They came home, and looked at the moon. And when President Kennedy said we could even defeat the distance of space, they said, "Let's go".

That determination and spirit made us the country we are today. They wouldn't take no for an answer. And neither should we.

The threat today is our reliance on foreign oil. Our generation needs a Declaration of Energy Independence. If we can beat the British, defeat slavery, triumph in World War II and land Americans on the moon, we can design vehicles that get more than 40 miles per gallon. That is today's challenge.

Sonny Dolci never said "It's too hard" when it came to the safety and security of his country, his community, his comrades, or his children.

And as long as his spirit and fortitude lives in each of us, we will give the next generation of children the peace and security that Sonny fought and worked to give us.

And that is the greatest legacy of all.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE JUDGE CORDELL MEEKS, JR.

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 10, 2006

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding Kansas jurist who recently was taken from us too soon: 29th Judicial District Court Judge Cordell Meeks, Jr., who died unexpectedly on June 28th of a heart attack at age 63.

Born and raised in Kansas City, Kansas, Judge Meeks served on the bench for nearly